

Francis Preston Blair to Andrew Jackson, October 6, 1842, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

FRANCIS P. BLAIR TO JACKSON.

Washington, October 6, 1842.

My Dear General, I have received several kind letters from you within the last two weeks, but being confined with a sharp attack of bilious 0197 173 fever, I was unable to acknowledge them. My wife and I have been taken down upon the same day, just two weeks ago, and we are barely able now to leave our rooms. Still on the day the fever intermitted, I was obliged to scratch a little for the Globe. Our city generally has been infected with bilious fever, but as we have had some frost, the people begin to rally. At one time they had drained the last drop of quinine in the shops. I intended to have had a little cottage at my healthy country place, so that I might escape the malaria of Mercer's Marsh which he has caused in the potomac by defeating your projected Bridge and making a Causeway. The river is stagnant and filling up with mud both above and below the Causeway, and growing to a marsh for miles, which exposes hundreds of acres of rotten weeds to the sun at every ebb tide. It will render portions of the city uninhabitable during August and September. Next fall I will be provided with a Snug country residence out of its reach.

Betsy, I find from her letters has been charmed with her visit to the Hermitage, happy in again taking by the hand the author of the prosperity of her family and in meeting again under his roof, the dear little ones and the group of friends to which her young heart became so early and fondly attached. She gave me in her letter the history of her choice of Emuckfau and is exceedingly proud that her good fortune directed her to the selection

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of your favourite. Your letter giving me the line of her great ancestry, has brought me to the Resolution that she shall never tarnish it, by any low connexion. Her progeny shall come from Boston, Eclipse, Sir Henry or some of the imported Monarchs of great lineage. I think it worthy of the ambition of a Republican to ride "booted and spurred," what the nobility abroad value almost as their own blood, and I hope I shall have many descendants from Emuckfau, a fine stock of animals, which will set them above the Great abroad, in a particular in which they pride themselves most, and without violating any of the doctrines of our Democracy. I am almost afraid, to trust Emuckfau to the care of Steamboat captains and Stage Drivers. I think I should employ some special and trusty person to bring her on. Or if this cannot be done without too much expense, as Major Lewis and myself have resolved to pay you a visit on the adjournment of Congress next Spring I will be able then to take charge of her my self. Being but a catch of 115 pounds, I could walk her across Kentucky in two or three days and embark her from Louisville on a steamboat and mount her again at Wheeling and ride her home. I must see you and chat our public affairs with you for a week or two and read over with you the history of your life and take notes of your reminiscences for the use of your Biographer, whether Mr. Kendall or some other. You may rely confidently on seeing us next spring unless some very untoward accident prevents. Among other things I have a willow from the tomb of Napoleon (St. Helena) brought by the exploring Expedition, 1 a slip of which I wish to plant with my own hands at the Hermitage as a memorial

1 That of Capt. Charles Wilkes.

0198 174 of my visit and the homage my heart pays you. But I am detaining you with a long and silly letter. Give my love to Mrs. Jackson and the Dear little ones And believe me affectionately

Yr. friend